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DYNAMIC FACTORS IN THE LIBERIAN SITUATION

*By George W. Ellis K.C., F.R.G.S., recently Secretary of
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The daring adventures and the astonishing discoveries, disclosed by European exploration during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, precipitated a world-wide movement toward Africa and its races, a movement which at times seems destined to modify if not to affect seriously the character and quality of Western civilization.

The wealth and wonder of Africa were so alluring that within the brief space of a few years we witnessed the extraordinary phenomenon of a great continent, eagerly divided up into spheres of trade and political influence, and the future of its inhabitants consigned to the indefinite dominion of colony-holding powers.

But in the providence of events, as some believe, Liberia and Abyssinia, have been preserved to this day, through darkness and through difficulties, with their independence intact and their sovereignty unimpaired.

LIBERIAN REPUBLIC: POPULATION AND TERRITORY

Of American origin, the Republic of Liberia is a Negro state situated on the west coast of Africa. Beginning as an American colony in 1821, it declared its independence in 1847. At its declaration of independence it adopted a constitution and modeled its political, social, and religious institutions after those of the United States. On a hitherto barbarous coast for nearly three quarters of a century, under the most trying circumstances and against the prejudice and rivalry of powerful European states, a small band of American Negroes has struggled to develop themselves and to establish and to perpetuate in Liberia the democratic

institutions of the American people, as an example and inspiration to the millions of the African black belt, who are yet to actualize and achieve their highest and best self.

(1) *Population*

Beginning with less than one-hundred emigrants eighty-nine years ago, those civilized Liberians now engaged in this important work approximately are from 60,000 to 75,000 and are distributed along the coast in seaport towns from Cape Mount to Cape Palmas and in settlements up the Saint Paul, Cavalla, and other Liberian rivers.

In addition there are in Liberia more than 2,000,000 aboriginals, some fourteen or fifteen tribes, living in accord with their native tribal institutions, except where modified by Liberian laws, and residing along the coast and throughout the Liberian hinterlands.

Among them are numerous and powerful tribes, exhibiting leaders of remarkable intelligence, possessing wise men of astonishing scholarship, and having common men of wonderful aptitude and military prowess. A collection of their industrial products discloses a high order of artistic skill and a wide range of initiation in articles employed in their industries, decoration, and dress.

The visitor soon distinguishes the aggressive Grebo from the simple and hard-working Kpwesi, the sea-faring Kru and Basa from the militant Gola and Mendi, and notes with surprise the dignity, bearing, and manners of the scholarly Vai and Mandingo, the latter being so widely and favorably known as the gentlemen of West Africa.

(2) *Territory*

With a heavy forest and its territory decreased to about 50,000 square miles, Liberia has the highest mountains in West Africa, and is remarkably free from the fever-laden mangrove swamps and marshy lagoons which characterize the Ivory and Slave coasts, and is generally regarded as the most healthful and "the Garden Spot of West Africa."

It is significant that Liberian territory, generally hilly and increasing in elevation interiorward to the grassy lands of the Mandingan plateau, with the exception of 350 miles of sea frontage, is entirely surrounded by the possessions of strong European powers. In the colony of Sierra Leone Great Britain is on the west, and including now the Ivory Coast French West African possessions are on the north and east.

Liberia's proximity to British and French possessions makes contact and communication frequent and easy, and has given rise to some very grave questions in their international intercourse.

ALARMING NATURE OF THE SITUATION

Growing out of some of these questions, Liberia has lost section after section of her valuable lands; time and again the Liberian government has been humiliated before its overwhelming aboriginal population; but at last the Liberian people have been so alarmed and aroused by what seemed to them unjustifiable international interferences, false and studied accusations and charges against their government, deliberate and unwarranted threats against their independence, and such overt preparations and acts as would make sure the dismemberment of their territory and the subversion of their sovereignty, that there has existed for some time such an abnormal and complex situation of affairs in Liberia as to make it now the scene of important international attention and of considerable consideration and interest to the American government and people.

There have been other important and critical periods in Liberian history; and while the present situation differs from all the rest, in the number, strength, and violent activity of its factors and the increased complexity of public affairs, brought about by the concurrent action of powerful rival and conflicting forces; yet, it is the natural sequence of what has gone before in a series of Liberian misfortunes which have their beginning in the foundation of the state.

LIBERIA'S PART IN ABOLITION OF AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE

Liberia was planted in West Africa as an asylum for the American Negro, where he might be free from the cruelties and outrages of American bondage. It was therefore natural and right for the Liberian colony to join hands with the powers to blot out the African slave trade, which still secretly flourished and lingered on the Liberian coast long after the British West Indies and the United States had been removed from the slave markets of the world.

Driven from the Pongo Regions northwest of Sierra Leone, Pedro Blanco settled in the Gallinhas territory northwest of the Liberian frontier, and established elaborate headquarters for his mammoth slave-trading operations in West Africa, with slave-trading substations at Cape Mount, Saint Paul River, Basa, and at other points of the Liberian coast, employing numerous police, watchers, spies, and servants.

To obtain jurisdiction the colony of Liberia began to purchase from the lords of the soil as early as 1824 the lands of the Saint Paul Basin and the Grain Coast from the Mafa River on the west to the Grand Sesters River on the east. So that by 1845, twenty-four years after the establishment of the colony, Liberia with the aid of Great Britain had destroyed throughout these regions the baneful traffic in slaves and the slave barracoons, and had driven the slave-trading leaders from the Liberian coast.

FIRST DIFFICULTY WITH GREAT BRITAIN

The traders in slaves soon were followed by British subjects engaged in the legitimate trade of palm oil and other Liberian products. These traders were advised by the Sierra Leone government that the colony of Liberia had no right to exercise powers of sovereignty, such as collecting duties and harbor dues, and so informed Liberia in the Dring case; and later the British government informed the government of the United States, through our ambassador at London, Mr. Everett, that,

Her majesty's naval commanders would afford efficient protection to British trade against improper assumption of power on the part of the Liberian authorities.¹

So when the Liberian colony attempted in 1845 to enforce its revenue laws against Captain Davidson, a British subject, who openly defied them, the British government sent an English gunboat into Grand Basa harbor and seized a Liberian vessel, as compensation for a British ship, seized by Liberian authorities, and belonging to Davidson, because he had refused to pay harbor dues.

The American government intervened, but when it ascertained the position of Great Britain, it disclosed the timidity of its own attitude by stating that it was not

presuming to settle differences arising between Liberian and British subjects, the Liberians being responsible for their own acts.²

Unable to obtain the necessary protection from the United States government, or to abandon the enforcement of its revenue laws, the only support of its civil administration, Liberia was forced to try to meet the situation in some way, and so long before it was prepared it was compelled by the attitude of Great Britain to declare its independence.

LIBERIAN NORTHWEST TERRITORY DIFFICULTY

The slave trade still flourished in the territory generally known as the Gallinhas territory, between Liberia and the colony of Sierra Leone, in 1847.

Soon after the declaration of Liberian independence President Roberts went to Europe to secure for Liberia international recognition among the powers. While in England a British philanthropist, Lord Ashley, arranged to raise for President Roberts £2000 to purchase the Gallinhas territory, in order to suppress the slave traffic in this region. President Roberts returned to Liberia and by 1856 had secured by purchase from the native owners the title and

¹Lord Aberdeen to Mr. Everett.

²Mr. Everett to Lord Aberdeen.

deeds to all the Gallinhas territory from the Mafa River to the Sherbro Island, and had exterminated the trade in slaves in this section.

To this territorial acquisition of Liberia no objection was made at the time by the government of Great Britain, although President Roberts in another trip to Europe in 1852 duly informed the British government of his having completed the extension of Liberian sovereignty over the Gallinhas territory as far as Sierra Leone.

Following the destruction of the slave trade there sprung up in this section a flourishing trade in palm oil, and numerous British merchants from Sierra Leone settled on the upper Liberian coast, in the Gallinhas territory.

It was the fashion of these British traders to settle at points remote from civilized Liberian settlements where they might the more easily escape the payment of customs duties to the Liberian government.

John M. Harris, a British merchant, stationed himself in this region between the Sulima and Mano rivers. He not only refused to acknowledge and obey the customs regulations, but in every respect openly defied the authority of the Liberian government. He was so bold in his infringement of the customs laws that the Liberian government felt it absolutely necessary to take some action against him to prevent the demoralization of its customs administration.

So in 1860 the Liberian government sent a coastguard and captured two schooners belonging to Harris, between Cape Mount and Mano Point, while they were engaged in the contravention of Liberian revenue laws. The Sierra Leone government sent the *Torch*, a British gunboat, to Monrovia and took suddenly from the Liberian government by force the two offending Harris schooners.

Then for the first time Great Britain began to dispute Liberia's title to any portion of the Gallinhas territory. It was while President Benson was in England on this question, in 1862, that Earl Russel first informed him that the British government recognized the political rights of Liberia *only* to extend east of Turner's Peninsula to the River San Pedro.

Urged on by the Sierra Leone government and supported by the British government, Harris continued to defy the Liberian authorities and went so far as to ally himself with native chiefs and sent a war upon the Vais in the vicinity of Grand Cape Mount. The Liberian government at different times sent expeditions in defense. In one of them the Gallinhas attack was repelled and some of the Harris forces, smarting under defeat, returned and destroyed some of the Harris factories. The British government demanded an indemnity of £8878.9.3 for the Harris losses, and extended her disputation to all the territory from Sherbro Island to Cape Mount.

Liberia appealed to the United States and the questions were discussed without conclusion for nearly twenty years, in two commissions and in the diplomatic correspondence of Liberia, Great Britain, and the United States, during which British claims were run up to £17,899.5.3.

Great Britain promised to submit this boundary question to the arbitration of the United States, but when the time arrived at the meeting of one of the commissions at Sierra Leone she firmly declined to do so.

A careful study of the facts in this question warrants the conclusion that these British subjects were encouraged and sustained by the Sierra Leone government to violate Liberian customs laws and to openly defy Liberian authority in order to keep up trouble and to lay the foundation for just such a British demand as was presented in "the Harris and Manna River Claims," as a kind of show of justification for taking Liberian territory. And when Great Britain was ready to take the territory she abandoned the British claims.

Finally in 1882, over the warmest diplomatic advocacy of Liberian rights by the United States, Great Britain sent Sir Arthur Havelock, governor of Sierra Leone and consul to Liberia, armed with four gunboats, to Monrovia and secured under duress from the Liberian president a treaty giving up all Liberian rights to the Gallinhas territory from Sherbro Island to the Mafa River, in exchange for the sum of £4750 and the abandonment of British claims.

Later through the influence of the United States this boundary was fixed in the Anglo-Liberian treaty of 1885 at the Mano River, and thus a contest for Liberian territory was temporarily closed while a larger one was opened, which, with comparative success, has continued to the present day.

LIBERIAN BOUNDARY DIFFICULTIES WITH FRANCE

The national and international effect of this forcible annexation of Liberian northwest territory by Great Britain was not only distressing but far-reaching. Liberia was deeply wounded and permanently injured. The hope of effective protection from the United States, when in the right, so widely entertained by the Liberian people, was most seriously impaired and the spirit which had sustained the great work of Liberian civilization was most vitally depressed. European powers, and especially France, were now impressed that the United States would hardly do more for Liberia than use her diplomatic good offices. And although French sentiment condemned the attitude of Great Britain in the matter of the Anglo-Liberian boundary, France began to think how she might follow British example.

For centuries France and England had been rivals. France entered the crusade for the abolition of the slave trade in West Africa to share with Great Britain any advantages to be obtained. She now turned her attention to the Liberian situation.

The Maryland State Colonization Society, with funds raised in the United States, purchased the title to the lands of the Ivory Coast east of Cape Palmas as far as the San Pedro River in 1846. These lands were transferred to the State of Maryland in Liberia in 1854, and to Liberia in 1857; and aside from receiving no protest from any of the powers at the time, this territory was in the undisputed possession of Liberia for nearly forty years.

In addition to making claims to Cape Mount, Grand Basa, Great and Little Butu, and Garrawe, points on the main Liberian coast, France claimed in 1891 the Ivory Coast, based on title deeds obtained by French Naval commanders,

who visited the Liberian coast about 1890. Upon the French announcement of the acquisition of the Ivory Coast to the Powers, Great Britain and the United States formally objected and Liberia appointed Baron de Stein, a Belgian subject, as her representative at Paris to adjust this boundary dispute.

During the Paris negotiations France proposed to waive her other claims on the Liberian coast and give 25,000 francs in addition if Liberia would relinquish her claim to the territory east of the Cavalla River. Discouraged by the experience of the northwest boundary dispute, Baron de Stein was instructed by the Liberian executive government to sign a treaty to this effect. Upon interest taken by the United States in the controversy, the Liberian senate hesitated to ratify this treaty of 1892, when under the influence of information of French advances near Cape Palmas and telegrams from Paris announcing French threats, the Liberian government felt it useless to contend further and surrendered to France its Ivory Coast on the east.

PRESENT BOUNDARY PROBLEM WITH GREAT BRITAIN

In 1903 the Anglo-Liberian boundary was delimited. The line threw the Kaure-Lahun Section to the republic of Liberia, where the Liberian flag was raised without protest or opposition. At the time of the delimitation the town of Kaure-Lahun was occupied by a detachment from the Sierra Leone frontier force, and although that town was admitted to belong to Liberia, the British force did not evacuate it.

In 1904 the British government asked permission for the further advance of British troops into Liberian territory to suppress a reported native war between Fabunda of Kaure-Lahun and Kafura of the Gissi Country, which war was said to threaten British interest by raids into British territory. The permission was granted and Kafura was defeated and driven from his country. Improving the advantage of this occasion the British later extended their occupation to the whole of what is now called the Kaure-Lahun Section and evinces no disposition to ever give it up.

Already Fabunda had been taken under the protection of the British government. In this process of expansion, assisted by the Sierra Leone frontier force, Fabunda began and waged a cruel campaign against native chiefs in this section who would not throw off their allegiance to the Liberian republic. Liberian officers from near this section reported the burning of towns, the slaughter of men, and the capture and carrying off of women and children.

Although the Liberian government has sent two frontier forces to police this section, Great Britain still refuses to withdraw from Liberian territory on the plea that Liberia has not shown her ability to effectively control this territory, for whose occupation and government Sierra Leone is said to have spent large sums of money. Liberian customs officials were frightened by the Sierra Leone frontier force and compelled to withdraw from the line, *a military zone was established, and a new boundary indicated, beyond which the Liberian government is not permitted to exercise administrative jurisdiction.*

The Kaure-Lahun zone is a rich and valuable section, lying in the gateway to the Sierra Leone Railway and through which much trade is diverted from Liberian hinterlands before it reaches the Liberian coast. Through interior supervision Liberia is now seeking to increase her own foreign exportations by getting control of her own great hinterland trade, most of which now goes to Sierra Leone on the west and French possessions on the east; and it would be another great misfortune to the Liberian republic if from her possession Great Britain should ultimately be permitted to take, under any pretext whatever, another valuable section of Liberian territory.

For the above and other reasons, since the occupation of Kaure-Lahun, Great Britain has offered Liberia £6000 for this section, or to exchange for it the Moro Territory, a depopulated strip on the west bank of the Mano River. The Liberian government has promptly refused to part with the Kaure-Lahun Territory, either by exchange or by sale.

PRESENT BOUNDARY PROBLEM WITH FRANCE

Although the treaty of 1892 defined the Franco-Liberian boundary, the government of France took no steps to delimit it. In the meantime, aroused by Great Britain's occupation of Kaure-Lahun, the French government began to make advances into Liberian hinterlands, so far inside the boundary as indicated in the Franco-Liberian treaty of 1892, that the Liberian government became very uneasy and exhibited great anxiety to have the Franco-Liberian boundary delimited in accord with the treaty of 1892. For this purpose a Liberian commission was hurried to France in 1904, but French claims were so large that no understanding could be reached. France continued to press her encroachments upon Liberian territory, claiming nearly half of the hinterlands of the three Liberian countries: Basa, Sino, and Maryland. In 1905 Liberia sent a special envoy to Paris in another vain endeavor to have the Franco-Liberian boundary delimited.

Finally when the French had secured, contrary to the terms of the treaty of 1892, the occupation of most valuable Liberian hinterlands, Great Britain informed Liberia that unless French advances were checked on the north the British government on behalf of British interest on the west would proceed to occupy more Liberian territory contiguous to Sierra Leone. The president of Liberia was required to visit both London and Paris, and to prevent further encroachments on all sides, the Franco-Liberian treaty of 1907 was negotiated, in which France exacted from Liberia the title to the Liberian territories which she had forcibly occupied.

And now so soon France seeks to obtain by a strained construction of the treaty of 1907 and to force it in the delimitation, a large section of Liberian territory in the upper basins of the Saint Paul and Saint John Rivers, as will be tantamount to the acquisition of the best and most valuable of Liberian hinterlands.

The treaty of 1907 has two provisions effecting the division of tribes in the delimitation of the Franco-Liberian line. One of them provided that no tribe or section of tribe

shall be divided. Some tribes have no subdivisions; in that case they were, unless otherwise stipulated, to fall in *toto* to France or Liberia; but tribes having sections or subdivisions were to be divided in accord with the subdivisions.

For example there are the Gorgie section, the Teckya section, and the Mamba section of the Gola tribe. In dividing a tribe like this it was understood by Liberia that the tribe was to be divided in such a manner as to keep all of any one section together; all the Gorgies, all the Mambas, and all the Teckyas, so as not to interfere with ethnological unities in the interest of civil administration. To the Liberian few things seemed clearer and were better understood.

Now the other provision stipulates that the towns Soundedou, N'Zappa, Kioama, and Banjedou shall be given to France. This provision modifies the other one by specifically dividing sections which were prohibited, but it definitely points out how this division of section shall be done by giving certain and named towns to France. Now France seeks more Liberian territory by construction, and by claiming the territory of all the tribes to which these towns belong, and, in spite of the fact that some of these tribes have sections and subdivisions.

And thus it seems evident that neither France nor Great Britain will ever be satisfied with anything less than the total absorption of Liberian territories, and the complete obliteration of the Liberian republic.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIBERIAN SITUATION

And here, just in the midst of this endless and unceasing struggle for Liberian lands between two most active and aggressive powers, the Liberian situation is multiplied in complexity by the activity of two other independent and powerful forces, and by the combined psychological action of all of them upon the Liberian public mind.

The importance of the Liberian Situation was greatly heightened by what gradually impressed the Liberian people as a deeply laid political plan, of quietly getting control of the military and other departments of the Liberian govern-

ment in the name of *Reform*, which plan had for its object the ultimate otherthrow of Liberian sovereignty, and the limitation of the destiny of the Liberian republic to a British colony.

It developed very much in this way. Realizing that Liberia was in a rapid process of territorial extinction, Liberian statesmanship was impressed that the future integrity of Liberian territory and independence might be preserved by developing Liberian resources through the financial assistance of some strong foreign power, and by the cultivation of closer and more intimate relations with her territorial neighbors.

At this point it is necessary to refer to the influence of the British Loan of 1871.

(1) *Fraud of British Loan of 1871*

At the rate of 7 per cent, in 1871, Liberia authorized the negotiation of a British loan of \$500,000. Of this amount not less than \$100,000 were to pay off the Liberian public debt; not less than \$100,000 were to be deposited in Liberia as the basis for the issuance of a limited currency; and the balance was to be left in a banking institution subject to the order of the Liberian legislature.

Contrary to the terms of the loan fixed by the Liberian legislature, the British negotiators retained \$150,000 for their services and took out in advance from the remaining \$350,000 the interest for three years, amounting to something like \$105,000. Honorable E. F. Roye, president of Liberia, authorized Mr. Chinery, a British subject and Liberian chargé d'affaires and consul general at London, to supply the secretary of the Liberian treasury with goods and merchandise not to exceed \$50,000. Other sums were squandered and misappropriated to such an extent both in England and in Liberia, that the Liberian republic received with difficulty the benefit of only about \$135,000 of the 1871 loan. In fact, so much fraud attended the negotiation of this 1871 loan that the Liberian people repudiated it for a time, and deposed President Roye and prosecuted

some of his agents for their known connection with this notorious fraud, and because the president sought to quash the matter by the extension of his presidential term by proclamation.

In 1899, however, the Liberian government resumed its responsibility for a little less than \$400,000 of the loan of 1871, agreed to pay a progressive interest of from 3 to 5 per cent, and provided a sinking fund of 1 per cent of certain bond sales, etc., for its ultimate settlement. It made the loan a first charge upon Liberian customs revenue and secured the interest with one-half of the export duty on rubber. And up to the present time Liberia has met all her obligations of 1899.

(2) *Terms of British Loan of 1906*

Because of repeated expressions of friendship, on the part of Great Britain and the financial relations subsisting between Liberia and British subjects, growing out of the 1871 loan, British influence had a decided advantage over other rival influences in the negotiation of another foreign loan which was felt to be necessary in carrying out the new internal problems, forced upon Liberia by Great Britain and France.

So the British loan of 1906 was accepted by Liberia with a reluctance and hesitancy that subsequent developments have more than justified. Liberia secured from Messrs. Erlanger and Company, London brokers, through the Liberian Development Company, Chartered and Limited, another British company, a loan of \$500,000 under an agreement, which in a general way, among other things, provided that the loan was to be applied in the following manner:

- (a) \$25,000 for any pressing Liberian obligation.
- (b) \$125,000 for paying domestic debts.
- (c) \$35,000 to be loaned to the Liberian Development Company.
- (d) The balance to be devoted to the development of banking and road schemes by the Liberian Development Company in Liberia.

As security for this loan British officials, as chief and assistant inspectors of customs, were to have charge of the Liberian customs revenue, and the chief inspector was to act as financial advisor to the republic. In semi-annual payments \$30,000 were to be paid annually as interest by the Liberian government until all of the loan was repaid. Ten per cent of any excess of \$250,000 in Liberian customs revenue was to be received by the Liberian Development Company. And the Liberian Development Company was charged with the responsibility of returning the loan to Messrs. Erlanger and Company by the payment of 50 per cent of the net profits derived from the exercise of the powers and privileges of the charter of the former company, together with profits from the banking and road schemes to be undertaken in Liberia.

The loan was actually applied as follows:

(a) To extinguish domestic debts.....	£ 30,000. 0.0.
(b) Loaned to Liberian Development Company, Limited.....	7,000. 0.0.
(c) In carrying out road scheme in 1906 agreement.....	32,776.11.3.
(d) Obtained by Liberia on ratification of Tripartite Agreement, 1908.....	30,223. 8.9.
Total.....	£100,000. 0.0.

(3) *Reasons for Tripartite Agreement, 1908*

Much friction attended the administration of the Liberian customs by British officials, whose salaries were paid by the Liberian government. The Liberian Development Company completed about fifteen miles of an automobile road in the Careysburg district, had purchased one small steam launch for the Saint Paul River, and two automobiles which the Company was never able to operate successfully, when the company suddenly represented that all the funds for building roads were exhausted, after having spent on an ordinary dirt road something like \$163,882.70. The Liberian people were so dissatisfied with the expenditure of such a large sum for such meager results that Liberian confidence

was greatly impaired in the ability of the Liberian Development Company to expend wisely the balance of the £70,000 which had been entrusted without security to the management of the company.

The Liberian government modified the agreement of 1906 by what is known as the Tripartite Agreement of 1908. By this agreement Liberia assumed direct responsibility to Messrs. Erlanger and Company for the loan of 1906, and aside from obtaining some advantages in the new agreement secured from the Liberian Development Company the residue of the loan, amounting to £30,223.8.9, and practically dispensed with the future services of this company in the solution of the new Liberian problems.

(4) Reforms Demanded by Great Britain

While the Liberian government was having its sad and unfortunate experience with the Liberian Development Company, the British government demanded the reorganization of Liberian finances, the reform of the Liberian judiciary, and the establishment of a Liberian frontier force under British officers, for the policing of the Anglo- and Franco-Liberian frontiers; and coupled with these demands the statement on the one hand, that if Liberia would adopt these reforms, perhaps, Great Britain might give up Kaure-Lahun, and on the other hand, that if Liberia did not carry out these reforms Great Britain would not guarantee the future independence of the Liberian republic.

As all these reforms are necessary, the Liberian government did not hesitate to enter upon their immediate prosecution. In the financial, judicial, and military departments of the Liberian government the reform work was making considerable progress under British direction, when remarkable disclosures concerning the intentions and conduct of resident British officials brought British direction and influence to a tragic and sudden close.

(5) *The Crisis*

British officials in charge of the Liberian customs demanded more subinspectors and three more were added to the customs staff. The British influence was insisting that Mr. Inspector Lamont should not only be financial advisor but that he should have the veto power over the expenditures of the Liberian government with a seat in the Liberian cabinet.

Under the command of Major Cadell, a British officer, the construction of the Monrovia barracks and the organization of a Liberian frontier force were hopefully begun in the midst of the confusion created by the protests of the Germans along the Liberian coast on the one hand, and by the indignant attitude of France, who demanded equal representation with Great Britain in the official staff of the Liberian frontier force on the other, and who regarded this Liberian frontier force as little other than a "British army of occupation."

Liberia was informed that if she consented to the French demands Great Britain would join with France in the disrapture and division of the republic.

Assisted by two other British officers with the rank of captain, Major McKay Cadell enlisted, contrary to Liberian law, not less than a third of the Liberian frontier force from British subjects of Sierra Leone. At first he denied it, and refused to dismiss them upon the request of the Liberian government, and only admitted it when further denial was useless.

The caps, suits and other supplies of the Liberian frontier force were stamped with the crown and other emblems of His Britannic Majesty's service, and various conflicting explanations were offered to the people.

Major Cadell persuaded the Monrovia city government to permit him to undertake without compensation the command of the city police force, as chief of police. He not only supplanted the loyal Kru police force with Mendi soldiers from the barracks, but sought to be street commissioner, tax collector, treasurer of the city, and so many

other functions of government, that the people were compelled to dispense with his *free services*. He declined to resign and presented a large bill as the condition upon which he would deliver up the city property entrusted to him.

Major Cadell reached the point where he refused to be supervised by the Liberian government and resented suggestions on the part of the President to such an extent that the British consul general required the major's letters to the president to be first submitted to the British consulate general.

The disposition and conduct of Major Cadell at the barracks became such a menace in the estimation of the Liberian public that the general government as well decided to dispense with the services of this officer as the commander of the Liberian frontier force at the Monrovia barracks. This time he not only refused to resign, but he made out and presented a large unitemized bill to the Liberian government, and wrote a letter to President Barclay, sending a copy to the senate, in which he threatened violence to the Liberian executive unless his demands were met in twenty-four hours.

Major Cadell had thrown up rock breast-works six feet deep with port holes on the approaches leading from Monrovia, and endeavored to regain possession of some guns which he had sent to a shipping company upon the order of the British consul general.

On February 5, 1909, the British consul general, Captain Braitwaite Wallis, informed the British government that there was a mutiny in the Monrovia barracks, contrary to the facts, eight days before Commander Cadell disclosed this remarkable information to the Liberian president; and had had the *Mutiny*, a British warship, at Monrovia in anticipation of a conflict, to the consummation of which every endeavor had been made, on February 13th, the day upon which Major Cadell startled the Liberian people with his threat of violence.

At once Monrovia was ordered under arms and the greatest unrest prevailed throughout the city. The *Mutiny* changed its position in the harbor to within easy view of the

barracks and the British consulate general, and two companies of the Liberian first regiment were stationed on the beach. Under the strain and stress of the hour the Liberian people met the situation with courage, patriotism, and discretion. And an armed conflict, which British officials had done so much to provoke, and the unnecessary slaughter of men were only avoided by the compliance of the British consul general with the Liberian request that the British subjects be withdrawn from the Liberian barracks, in order that the Liberian government might suppress any insurrectionary movement existing there. And with the withdrawal of Major Cadell the reported mutiny was at an end, and the Liberian government assumed in peace the command of its barracks. During the brief but eventful period in which Major Cadell had charge of the Monrovia barracks he expended on behalf of the Liberian government the sum of more than \$80,000, much of which was unaccounted for and unauthorized.

DYNAMIC FACTORS IN THE SITUATION

France, gradually but rapidly absorbing Liberian territory from the north and east and jealous of all rivals in Liberian affairs; Germany, establishing great trade and commercial centers along the Liberian coast and exerting its diplomatic and financial influence in behalf of Liberian independence and sending more merchant ships to Liberian waters than any other European power; Great Britain, extending at every convenient opportunity the territory of Sierra Leone at the expense of Liberia on the west and desirous of exercising the predominant influence in the Liberian republic; and the United States, the great determinative force, having established Liberia and using American good offices in her behalf since the foundation of the Liberian colony, and contributing more than \$100,000 annually to the support and maintenance of the educational and religious institutions of this little republic; these appear to me to constitute the great potential forces operating upon the Liberian people; but, Great Britain and France are the dynamic factors in the Liberian situation.

The action and reaction of the dynamic factors one upon the other, and the complex action of the two upon Liberian public life and social institutions, in so far as they have been put to unnecessary expense; in so far as the Liberian people have been wrongfully deprived of their territories; have been so distracted in mind and so depressed in spirit; have been kept so constantly in a keen struggle for self-preservation; that they have not been able to give the required attention to the several problems of their internal government, the development of their natural resources, and the assimilation of their large aboriginal population, to my mind in a general way are the main features of the Liberian situation.

LIBERIAN WEALTH OF NATURAL RESOURCES

It is true that Liberia is characterized by no striking geographical boundaries, yet within its limits is comprehended the greatest expression of the great *West African forest belt*. Separated from the forest of Old Calabar on the east by hundreds of miles of deforested regions of the Gold Coast and Dahome, and cut off on the west from the forested regions of Portuguese and French Guinea by the highlands of Futa Jalon, Liberia has a rich and varied flora and fauna, in some respects peculiar to itself, with some forms to be found in no other section of our world.

Besides the finest wood in the greasy peach, cherry, white gum, ebony, black gum, mahogany, and others the Liberian forest is rich with more than thirty varieties of rubber-producing plants, vines, and trees.

For agricultural purposes in the tropics it would be difficult to find lands more fertile and more luxuriant in their production than the basins of the Liberian rivers between the coast and the uplands of the Mandingan plateau.

Rich in the beautiful palms which produce the cocoanut, palm kernels, and palm oil, it is said that Liberia produces a coffee, indigenous to the soil, which in size, strength, and aromatic flavor is one of the most delightful and delicious of the superior coffees sent out from the coffee-producing countries.

For some time it has been believed that gold existed in Liberian hills and streams, and natives had been seen bringing gold dust to the Liberian coast. Recently mining experts have discovered gold, not only in two counties, but one mining engineer informed me that he has secured more than 100 diamonds within 25 miles of Monrovia, and exhibited in the rough some diamonds at the time.

OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICAN COMMERCIAL EXPANSION

For the possession of this great natural wealth of Liberia, European powers, for more than a quarter of a century, have been engaged in the most vigorous and aggressive rivalry.

Possessing untold wealth of mine and field and forest, occupying a commanding position at the head of the Gulf of Guinea, with ethnological relations through the Liberian Vais and Mandingos with the great Mande family extending into the Niger basin, Liberia is a natural gateway for American commercial expansion to the millions of those fine and robust races which inhabit the African black belt from the Senegal to the Red Sea. What an opportunity for the development of western commerce and the triumph of western civilization!

But aside from the development of Liberia's great natural resources, there is in the Liberian situation an opportunity for leadership in the engaging and enduring work of state building through our Negro Americans, and an opportunity for commercial expansion generally, that are worthy and entitled to the most serious consideration on the part of the American people.

And upon the highest possible grounds we have great historical and future interests in Liberia. Established by our countrymen as an expression of American trials and tribulations, the preservation of Liberia is an American opportunity. Following in the footsteps of the Galilean the American people have become the greatest by helping weaker peoples.

We fought and shed our blood that Cuba might be free, and surprised the world by starting her out upon the road

that leads to the glory of an independent and national destiny. We are helping the republic of Santo Domingo to keep her head financially above the waves; we are lifting the people of Porto Rico and the Philippines to the high and lofty plane of individual and collective self-government; and standing between China and her division by the powers, we have inspired the island empire of Japan to take her place among the first nations of the earth.

In the performance of a great national service the American people have never missed an opportunity. In the discharge of a great national duty and obligation the American people have never failed or faltered. Liberia is threatened to be blotted from the map. In the most anxious expectation we wonder if the United States will fail or falter now.

As the only salvation against the invasion of their homes, the convulsion of their cities, and the dismemberment of their territories, bought and given to them by American philanthropists as a partial atonement for the wrongs which America and Europe for so many centuries had committed against Africans and their native land, the *people of Liberia have appealed to the people of the United States*. The world listens for an answer. What shall the answer be?